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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT

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25X1A

COUNTRY Austria

DATE DISTR. 26 June 1950

SUBJECT Reorganization of the Communist
Party of Austria

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1. The Central Committee of the Austrian Communist Party has allegedly resolved to reorganize all sections of the party and form two or three new sections out of each old one. In this way the Central Committee hopes to train more functionaries and improve the party work. It is also believed that in this way it will be possible to spread propaganda more effectively in the factories and among the population. The Central Committee also believes that smaller sections and cells guarantee a better surveillance of individual party members.
2. The sections were directed by the Organizations Department in the Central Committee to make preparations for an encoding of party membership lists, with the code being known only to the section and cell chiefs. These security measures were to be prepared in the event that the party should go underground, which may be possible after a withdrawal of the occupation forces.
3. The purge of the Communist Party of Austria is centrally directed by the Organization Committee of the Central Committee, which is headed by Dr. Karl Altman.
4. According to the directives worked out by the Central Committee, all those members must be excluded from the party who :
 - a. Were at any time members or fellow-travellers of a Trotskyite organization;
 - b. Have not served notice of their withdrawal from the Austro-Yugoslav Society;
 - c. Read and pass on press information on Titoism;
 - d. Maintain close connections to right-wing Socialists;

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- e. Are suspected of belonging to more than one party;
- f. Failed to attend three consecutive party rallies without excuse;
- g. Refuse to accept party functions or deliberately sabotage them;
- h. Discredit by their attitude the reputation of the Communist Party of Austria.

Paragraph 2 of the party statutes will be applied more strictly in the future.*

Late February 1950

- 5. In total, 2,635 members of the Communist Party of Austria were purged by 15 February 1950, usually on charges of insufficient activity and non-payment of party dues. A report from the Austrian Central Committee organization department to the Politbureau stated that the number of members excluded as Titoites or Trotskyites was as low as 15 percent, and only 4 percent of them were party functionaries. Only one percent went over to opposition organizations, while most of the purged tried to join affiliated, seemingly non-partisan, organizations.
- 6. The members purged were not formally notified of their exclusion; they were simply not given the newly prepared membership cards. Only some rural district boards let the reasons for exclusion be known to those concerned.
- 7. The Central Committee expects that increased activity by the party members will result from the purge which is to be completed by 1 April 1950.

Early March 1950

- 8. The organization department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Austria received from all provincial boards, situation reports for the period between 1 and 15 February 1950 which indicated that the reorganization of the party was nearing completion. Only the Salzburg and Tyrol provincial boards are 60 percent behind, allegedly for lack of functionaries. The reports said that 17,416 new party functionaries have been appointed in Austria as a result of a dissolution of local groups and cells.
- 9. The party purge is being continued with undesired or unreliable party members being shifted to other organizations such as the Democratic Women's Association of Austria or the Austrian-Soviet Society. Dr. Altmann, chief of the organization department, expressed satisfaction with the results of the reorganization thus far. All efforts must now concentrate on training the new party officials to fit them for their work.
- 10. The entire organization from the smallest unit through the cells up to the district and area boards is to be drilled in March 1950. Members of cells are to meet weekly to learn of and execute directives of the district and provincial boards. A control organization of three men is to be organized in each district board to see that orders and directives are actually executed.

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